

San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

c/o Merced County Association of Governments - 369 W. 18th St. - Merced, CA 95340
Phone: 209-723-3153 - FAX 209-723-0322

August 20, 2009

Cynthia Bryant, Chair, Strategic Growth Council
The Governors Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

RE: Proposition 84 Planning Funds

Dear Ms. Bryant:

Representing one of the five major regions of the State, the San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee recommends the Strategic Growth Council implement the funding distribution proposed by SACOG in Mike McKeever's memo dated July 21, 2009. We also recommend the Council distribute the entire \$12 million to the MPOs versus the \$10 million identified in Mr. McKeever's memo. Overall, we feel the SACOG strategy distributes the funding to the areas with the most need for modeling improvements to address the Green House Gas (GHG) requirements of SB375.

Through the Blueprint effort, as a Valley, we have demonstrated our ability to work as a cohesive region. With these funds, we are willing to pool our resources and again work together to get the most out of our allocation.



Jesse Brown
Chair, San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee

CC: San Joaquin Valley COG Directors (8)
Mike McKeever, SACOG
Gordon Garry, SACOG
Julia Lave Johnston, OPR

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Association of
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Tulare County
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Ted Smalley

July 21, 2009

To: Cynthia Bryant, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

From: Mike McKeever, Executive Director 

Subject: Proposition 84 Planning Funds

As a follow-up to our good discussion last week, I am sending some more detailed ideas to illustrate how some of the planning funds could be productively used in the near term for modeling and data gathering. While what follows covers MPOs throughout the state, we have not had time to review this memo with them. Therefore, this is intended to serve as a starting point for a meeting that would involve all the key parties, as we discussed.

The primary purpose of the MPO model development program is to improve their analytical abilities to address the GHG requirements of SB375. A comprehensive RTAC survey of MPO modeling and data needs conducted earlier this year highlighted the fact that the MPOs have a range of models and data issues that must be addressed to fully comply with SB375.

First, more and better land use information through the use of parcel level data and the I-PLACE³S model is needed to evaluate land development impacts on travel demand and its emissions, and in the major urban areas, the models must be able to address economic incentives. The proposed funding program is a good start but not a complete package to meet these needs. With these funds, the MPOs will narrow the range in their capabilities. The improvement will also address other MPO needs for the RTP and other studies. At least a second year of funding for another \$10 million will be needed to provide the assurance that regional comparisons are a fair and objective assessment of the GHG targets.

Secondly, the funding approach proposed here is not a per-capita distribution. It is instead based on the specific needs of the MPOs identified in the RTAC survey, other information on what the MPOs currently are self-funding to upgrade their models and data, and the specific needs of SB375.

Third, it is important to state that these funds will not substitute for current commitments by the MPOs. These programs include activity-based model development underway at SCAG, MTC, and SANDAG; the first-generation activity-based model in use at SACOG; and the Caltrans-funded program to develop 4Ds model improvements with some of the MPOs (the first part of this project is funded at \$315,000, the second

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Winners
Wood
Yuba City
Yuba County

Cynthia Bryant

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part at \$837,000 is to be funded by Caltrans in this year's budget). The MPOs and state agencies should also be expected to continue their own data and model programs to address other MPO and COG responsibilities.

This recommended list of MPO and statewide projects varies by groupings of MPOs. The four largest regions need to focus on improving the travel models to fully address economic incentive programs and improving land use data to evaluate the higher density and mix of development plus transit service levels that are unique to them.

The eight MPOs in the Central Valley need to substantially improve the rule-based land use data system they currently use into a more detailed I-PLACE³S planning system. The eight travel models need some consolidation because the counties have overlapping economic spheres (and also fall within larger economic spheres). The travel models also need to improve their multi-modal abilities in addition to the 4Ds functionality in the I-PLACE³S model in order to address land use influences. The program will combine the 3 northernmost counties in the Central Valley into one model and another 4 counties into another model, leaving Kern County as a separate county level model.

The remaining MPOs are the smallest and are relatively slow growing. Their analytical needs center on land use data to understand the travel demand impacts within the context of small urban and town environments. The 4Ds travel model improvements with the I-PLACE³S model should show distinct impacts in the effects of land use density and mix.

The last class of projects is statewide. The Caltrans statewide travel model is funded to provide the inter-regional trip forecasts needed by all the regions. What are missing are the tools that will enable the MPOs to fully utilize the statewide model. The project therefore focuses on model operations, data management, and a web-based user interface. These tools will allow MPOs to build their own scenarios to test land use and transportation options and evaluate the impacts on inter-regional long-distance travel. The household travel survey is vital to medium-term improvements and the effort to improve consistency across the state. The survey must be a full partnership between the MPOs and Caltrans from design, to application and finally to data set development. The survey also requires the parcel data programs in all the other projects in order to provide a robust data set. The second year's funding is essential, plus additional funding from most if not all the MPOs and other state agencies. The full cost of the survey is probably in the \$8-10 million range.

MPOs	Immediate data and model needs	Funding (\$ 000)
SCAG	activity model testing, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$1,000
MTC/ABAG	activity model testing, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$800
SANDAG	testing of economic incentives in new travel model	\$400
SACOG	Economic incentives model	\$400
SJ COG	parcel data improvement, I-PLACE ³ S development,	\$1,000
STAN COG	trip distribution & mode choice,	
MERCED CAG	improvements in 4Ds post processor	
FRESNO COG	parcel data improvement, I-PLACE ³ S development,	
MADERA CTC	trip distribution & mode choice,	
TULARE CAG	improvements in 4Ds post processor	
KING CAG		\$1,000
KERN COG	4Ds improvements & testing, mode choice improvements	\$500
AMBAG	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
SLO COG	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
SBCAG	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
BUTTE CAG	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
SHASTA CO. RTPA	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
TAHOE MPO	more parcel work needed, I-PLACE ³ S development	\$400
Household travel survey	Partnership with all MPOs and Caltrans	\$2,000
Caltrans Statewide Model	Model operations, data management, web-based user interface	\$500
Total		\$10,000

cc: Bill Craven
Joe Caves
Ann Nothoff
Tom Adams

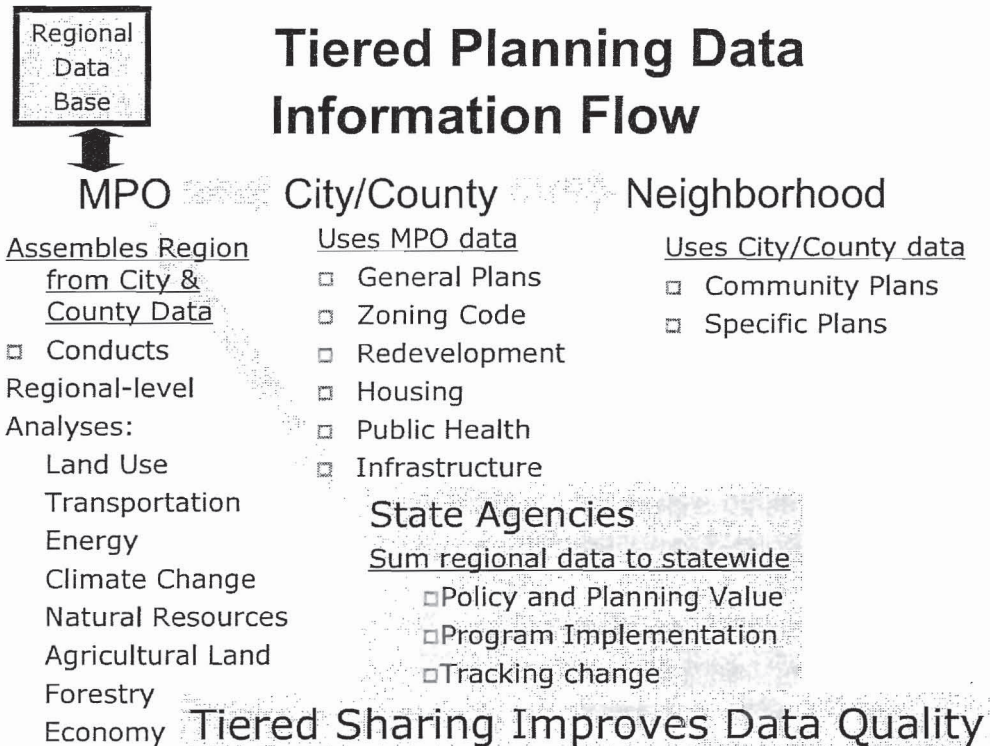
I-PLACE³S

Sustainable Growth & Development Planning Software

Background:

The California Energy Commission, working in partnership with local governments and private contractors, transformed the desktop PLACE3S program into the web-based comprehensive regional planning tool called I-PLACE³S (Internet-accessed **PL**anning for **C**ommunity **E**nergy, **E**nvironmental and **E**conomic **S**ustainability). This tool is designed to be deployed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Councils of Governments (COGs) to support integrated transportation, land use, economic and environmental analyses and scenario planning. I-PLACE3S contains an embedded travel model and special programming to account for the small changes and benefits associated with smart growth land use options. It scales between region wide and project /neighborhood levels of assessment, allowing MPOs and COGs to work more effectively with their member cities and counties and provide assessments of development proposals, General Plan policies and many other tasks. Citizens, public and private utilities, universities, and many other organizations participate as informed stakeholders.

In 2003, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) launched a region wide growth analysis called The Blueprint Transportation and Land Use Plan. SACOG's Blueprint project is helping planners and citizens throughout the six county Sacramento region to make informed land use choices for future growth. I-PLACE³S is being used to determine how differing growth decisions will affect the transportation system, air quality, climate change, housing, natural resource protection, the economy and many other issues. This information, and the input received from many public workshops, was used to inform SACOG's 2007 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The result is a strongly supported regional land use plan linked to a prioritized set of cost effective and environmentally beneficial transportation projects that will reduce vehicle miles traveled, meet housing needs, provide for economic development and preserve agricultural lands and open space.



I-PLACE³S System Overview:

- Enables users to both map and graph technical information for comparing Baseline and Alternative growth scenarios (housing, employment, transportation, air quality, water, opens space, energy, redevelopment, etc.)
- Supports interactive workshops that help to meaningfully involve stakeholders to quantitatively evaluate difficult growth issues as a collaborative working group
- Internet based system requires no specialized hardware or software for end users (only requires a free web browser such as Internet Explorer)
- Scales from neighborhood to extremely large geographic areas (greater than 750,000 parcels) and performs calculations and mapping in real time, without the need to apply grids or other data simplifying methods.
- Is expanded by adding new or updated modules and can be rapidly customized to meet the needs of individual organizations

Energy:

- Transportation fuel demand, alternative fuel sources
- Building energy demand and efficiency measures
- On-site generation, including renewable sources

Environmental constraints:

- Can apply and customize multiple environmental constraints
- Can set percentage of area to be protected for each constraint type
- Can assign priorities to manage overlapping areas of constraints

Public Health / Climate (developed for King County, WA):

- Public health effects associated with land use choices (currently obesity, physical activity and walking)
- Carbon dioxide generated from transportation
- Based on parcel level measurements of land use patterns and demographics
- Can also account for the impact of changes in transit service levels on public health and climate change.

Data exchange:

- Includes upload tools for MPO specific data (includes dynamic format error checking)
- Download all data as shapefile with attached data sets
- Download image files of any geographic area
- Interactive web reports and excel report option

Manage user access:

- Assign various levels of password access, read or edit rights to users
- Approve or deny user access for individual projects

Demonstration:

http://www.sacregionblueprint.org/sacregionblueprint/the_project/technology.cfm

Tutorial: <http://www.places.energy.ca.gov/places/>
(password and user name: demo)

Program Contact:

Kacey Lizon
Blueprint Program Manager
Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)
klizon@sacog.org

7/15/2009

Anna Marie Young

From: Randy Deshazo [RDeshazo@ambag.org]
ent: Wednesday, August 26, 2009 4:07 PM
To: Anna Marie Young
Cc: rselix@calcog.org; jdalarcon@mhac.org; John Doughty; Bhupendra Patel; Michael G. Powers
Subject: AMBAG comments on draft SGC criteria for MPO travel model improvement grants

Importance: High

Ms Young,

We appreciate the challenges in developing a consensus around a distribution of Prop 84 dollars for model improvements to the MPOs. While we support the SACOG proposal and those comments submitted by Michael Powers of SBCAG, we wish to submit the following points.

1. The review period for reviewing the draft guidelines was inadequate. The draft was released on Friday, 8/21, but not sent directly to each MPO.
2. Local match requirements, including in-kind contributions, will add more financial stress to small MPOs such as AMBAG. We are greatly concerned about this issue.
3. There is an urgent need for regional travel surveys and data collection to build a strong statewide model and therefore we recommend that the state focus on the statewide model development rather than sketch plan development. While useful, we believe that sketch planning tools are of secondary importance when compared to statewide modeling needs.
4. While the distribution of funds as described by SACOG in Mr McKeever's memo is reasonable and we support the SACOG proposal, we want to convey that 400,000 is not enough to meet our model upgrade needs. Further investments by the state, to meet state modeling requirements, will be needed in the near future.

Thank you,

Randy Deshazo, Principal Planner
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Rd, Suite G | Marina, CA 93933
(831) 883-3750

From: Michael G. Powers
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2009 3:10 PM
To: annamarie.young@opr.ca.gov
Cc: rselix@calcog.org; jdalarcon@mhac.org; Jim M. Kemp; Bill F. Yim
Subject: SBCAG comments on draft SGC criteria for MPO travel model improvement grants

Members: Strategic Growth Council
Attn: Anna Marie Young:

SBCAG offers the following comments on the draft Criteria for Awarding Proposition 84 fund for Model Development and Data Gathering. Please distribute these comments and recommend changes to the draft criteria to the Strategic Growth Council.

The time for review of these draft guidelines was inadequate. The draft was released on Friday, 8/21, but not sent directly to each MPO. We received a copy on Tuesday, 8/25, morning.

II. Funding Objectives

1. SBCAG concurs with the need for a statewide share of the funding but requests that it be targeted to the information that the MPO's have concurred is a priority, most particularly:
 - a. An extensive state-wide household travel survey including travel diaries,
 - b. Improvements of the statewide model, particularly on forecasts of inter-regional traffic including future year projections of external traffic occur at the MPO boundaries, such as "through" or "X-X" traffic (traffic that goes through and MPO boundaries) and "IX-XI" or traffic that has either trip end outside the MPO boundaries).
2. Clarify if this is a one-time application process and if all the funds will be dispersed at this time.
3. The reporting and documentation should be consistent with the OWP work elements which MPO's are familiar.

III. Funding Priorities

Priority #3 is too specific to larger MPO's as it references "tour/activity-based" transportation models which are still in the early stage of development. Rather, revise the priority to focus on improving current MPO travel modeling capabilities, particularly the land use-transportation connection between local/regional land use planning and transportation planning. This broader priority applies to all MPO's and does not force an approach, particularly one which is not applicable to most MPO's.

IV. Application Requirements

1. SBCAG concurs with the need for a short-medium-long term model improvement program but the time frame to develop the program and gain consensus from our local – region – state –and federal partners will take longer than the schedule permits. Rather require MPOs through the MPO Annual Overall Work Program (OWP) to include this in more detail in next year's OWP.
2. Medium to long-term model requirements should not necessarily be as specific as "tour/activity-based models" as these models may not be applicable most MPOs (ref comments on funding priorities), but meeting improvement requirements necessarily to fully integrate a transport-land use and economic model)
3. 2(f) Identification of MPO's consultant resources will take additional time
4. 5&7. SBCAG is uncomfortable with Criteria # 5 and #7 in which we would have to make a "commitment" to keep our model improvement plan updated to be consistent with state RTP guidelines and we would have to submit progress reports to the state the contents and frequency of which are not yet determined. How do we commit to do things we haven't seen?
5. Progress reports should be tied into the existing process and format for the OWP quarterly reports.

V. Evaluation Criteria

1. SBCAG disagrees that the “tour/activity based” model is the standard for all MPO’s.
2. SBCAG objects that the “tour/activity based” model is seen as the minimum standard since it is not the current advance state of the practice. It is still under development. Rather, revise the priority to focus on improving the land use-transportation connection between local/regional land use planning, economic development, and transportation planning.
3. Additional Criteria 4. The statewide travel survey funding should be taken out of the 1/6 allocation.

Thanks you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely

Michael G. Powers
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